

Vernon Hills, IL - U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Highland Park), joined by RADM-Ann Rondeau, the commander of Naval Training Center Great Lakes, announced today during a visit to the former Nike missile base in Vernon Hills, that the U.S. Navy has committed \$3.5 million to fund environmental clean up efforts at the site. The funds will be used to decontaminate missile silos found to contain asbestos and petroleum-based substances, limited soil removal, and extensive testing for the presence of trichloroethylene (TCE), a solvent used for cleaning metal parts.

“I am very pleased that Secretary of the Navy Gordon England has approved the funds needed to remediate this former missile base,” said Congressman Kirk. “I applaud the Navy’s commitment to clean up this site so that the land can be used for proposed athletic fields and to create open space in our community.”

Congressman Kirk met with Secretary England in late December to discuss funding the clean up of this site in an expedient manner which would allow the efforts currently underway to develop the land for proposed ball fields and village parks to continue. Kirk, who was made aware of the contamination in late June of last year, also inserted language in the 2002 National Defense Authorization Act.

Kirk, a member of the House Armed Services Committee inserted the following language in the FYO2 Defense Authorization Act:

Vernon Hills Nike Missile Site

“The committee is concerned with reports of toxic contamination at a former Nike missile battery site located in Vernon Hills, Illinois. The committee understands that the Department of the Navy is transferring ownership of the land to the Village of Vernon Hills where the land will be used to provide recreation and athletic facilities, a veterans’ memorial, and a storm water retention area. The committee recommends that the Secretary of the Navy review the current land transfer plan and ensure that remediation is completed in accordance with all applicable federal and state laws.”

Congressman Kirk and RADM Rondeau were taken on a tour of the site, examining the missile silos and other areas of concern. The Navy agreed to transfer 164- acres to the Village of Vernon Hills last year. The environmental contamination is confined to just five acres. The 164-acre site has been divided between the Village of Vernon Hills, Stevenson High School District 125, Lincolnshire-Prairie View Elementary School District 103, and Vernon Hills High School District 128. The land transfer will not become final until the environmental

contamination has been remediated.

“As the war on terrorism continues the size of our military will continue to grow,” said Congressman Kirk. “This action shows that the Navy will be a good environmental neighbor.”